WORDS OF RECONCILIATION.

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☞ A BLUE cross on the wrappers this month will signify to delinquent subscribers that the current year is half completed, and that they are still in arrears. We hope that such will bear in mind that this magazine is a pioneer in its field, and that it needs the constant and prompt support of all its friends.

☞ IT will be more convenient if correspondents will address us for the summer months (until September 15th) at "Princeton, N. J." Matter mailed to our usual Philadelphia address will be forwarded.

SCIENCE AND A FUTURE LIFE.

In a recent article in the *Nineteenth Century*, Mr. Frederick W. H. Myers discusses the question of man's survival after death from the scientific standpoint. He asserts that the chief spokesmen of modern science affirm that she can contribute nothing, either in the way of denial or of hope, to this most interesting inquiry.

"Nevertheless, in spite of, and by reason of her studied neutrality, the influence of science is every year telling more strongly against a belief in a future life."

Mr. Myers affirms, however, that a new class of facts is being brought to light "which must gradually revolutionize our whole attitude toward the question of an unseen world, and of our own past, present, or future existence therein." He describes these discoveries as made "in the realm of automatism and of human personality," and the reference is to that class of psychic phenomena which goes under the name of hypnotism.

His testimony concerning these is as follows:

It is as clear as such a matter can reasonably be made that thoughts and emotions of almost any degree of strength and complexity may occupy a sane mind for hours together, and yet at no time enter into the current of ordinary waking consciousness.

This in itself is a striking fact enough, and goes far to settle the question which Mill deemed incapable of direct attack. But these experiments have a significance which reaches far beyond the bounds of the ancient controversy. For the question is no longer of mere momentary intrusions into, or exclusions from, a stream of consciousness which is assumed to be practically synonymous with the man's entire being. On the contrary, we are now learning to conceive of our normal consciousness as representing only a fragment of the activity going on in our brains. We know of cases where a secondary current of consciousness—connected in various ways with the primary current—is always ready to take its place; so that the person lives alternately two lives, with different chains of memory, and even different characters. Nay, we know of cases, both spontaneous and experimentally induced, where the secondary consciousness has definitely replaced the primary one, and the person now possesses what would have been called in old times a different Self from that with which her earthly consciousness began.

These conclusions, I say, are now admitted; but, although admitted, they are still, I think, very imperfectly understood. They have as yet been observed mainly by physicians, who have seldom realized their profound psychological meaning. That meaning, as I understand it, is that no known form of human consciousness manifests, or comes near to manifesting, the total Self; and, consequently, that this empirical or superficial consciousness with which we habitually identify ourselves can only discover indirectly and inferentially, by experiment and artifice, the extent of our intellectual being. We know not what fraction of ourselves it may be which till now we have taken for the whole.

Mr. Myers believes also that among the variety of cases of phantasmal appearances and other evidences of communication with the unseen world, coming under the scrutiny of the Society for Psychical Research, there is at least a residuum of facts which make it probable "that some influence on the minds of living men is occasionally exercised by the surviving personalities of men departed." The general conclusions he arrives at are these:

I place together, then—as I claim that history gives me a *prima facie* right to do—certain experiments which have, so to say, gained general acceptance but yesterday, and certain cognate experiments which are on their way (as I think) to general acceptance on some not distant morrow; and I draw from all these a double line of argument in favor of human survival. In the first place, I point to the great extension and deepening which experiment has given to our conception of the content and capacities of the subconscious human mind, amounting, perhaps, to a shifting of man's psychical centre of gravity from the conscious to the unconscious strata of his being—and accompanied by

the manifestation of powers at least not obviously derivable from terrestrial evolution.

And, in the second place, I claim that there is, in fact, direct evidence for the exercise of some kind of influence by the surviving personalities of departed men. I claim that the analysis of phantasmal sights and sounds, treated by careful rules of evidence, indicates this influence. And I claim that it is indicated also by the analysis of those automatic messages which, in various manners, carry upward to the threshold of consciousness the knowledge acquired from unknown sources by the sub-conscious mind.

We who believe the Scriptures do not need to grope in this occult region for confirmations of our faith. At the same time, we can warmly sympathize with Mr. Myers in his effort to call a halt upon the numerous devotees of science who claim that they can take no other than an agnostic position upon this great question.

What chiefly interests us here, however, is to find that scientific study in this department of human nature is confirming conclusions to which we have been brought by the study of Scripture. The groundwork for the distinction which Mr. Myers makes between the conscious and the sub-conscious self, we find to lie in the fact that man has an interior nature which is divine and eternal, and an exterior and phenomenal existence which is merely human and mortal. We find that Scripture attributes to this "outward man," personality—that is, the ability to speak of itself as "I." We are not surprised, too, at the class of proofs which convinces Mr. Myers that departed personalities maintain some kind of connection with living men, and that they can enter into and even usurp the sphere of their self-consciousness. For Scripture constantly

assumes the fact of such influence and possessions from both directions. Uncleansed spirits are represented as frequently entering into men in such a way as to control their consciousness and confuse their personality, while, on the other hand, the Spirit of Christ and ministering holy angels, who, we have reason to believe, are the spirits of Christly men who are risen with Him, perform the offices of salvation for their human brethren warring in the flesh. Our readers will remember, also, that we have found one of the deepest laws of the divine system of the world, as revealed in Scripture, to be the redemption of vanished and incomplete lives through a perfected seed. This presupposes that a connection between these departed personalities and their future deliverers must be maintained in a way analogous to that in which nature always works in the realm of life. Her seed always treasures up the properties and potencies of the vanished life, and tends to reproduce it in a more perfect form. In this deep law of the race, which makes of the living and the dead one organism, with common interests and a common destiny, we find a divine basis for that class of soul-phenomena which Mr. Myers declares is teaching us "to conceive of our normal consciousness as representing only a fragment of the activity going on in our brains," and that "no known form of human consciousness manifests, or comes near to manifesting, the total self." "We know not what fraction of ourselves it may be which till now we have taken for the whole."

Not only is the mystery of man's being waiting to be cleared up by the new light coming to us from the region of both Scripture and Science, but the long-unsolved prob-

lem of human destiny is to be explained in the same light. The dark question of future punishment will be settled in such a way as shall bring glory to our Father-God, and true guidance and rest to men, as soon as this distinction is made plain between that personality of man which is outward and perishable and that individuality which in most men is yet "sub-conscious"—not having been awakened into self-conscious energy, and power of control by the touch of the Divine Spirit—and which is immortal and sinless. Destructionism and restorationism will be then seen to be two sides of one eternal truth, as will also God's love and consuming fire appear as two phases of the one essential light of Him in whom is no darkness at all.

"THE STATE OF MAN AFTER DEATH."

The doctrine of the Westminster Confession on this subject is thus stated (Ch. xxxii, 1):

The bodies of men, after death, return to dust, and see corruption; but their souls (which neither die nor sleep), having an immortal subsistence, immediately return to God who gave them. The souls of the righteous, being then made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies: and the souls of the wicked are cast into hell, where they remain in torments and utter darkness, reserved to the judgment of the great day. Besides these two places for souls separated from their bodies, the Scripture acknowledgeth none.

When we come to inquire into the Scripture proofs by

which these statements are supported, we find, first, that the doctrine that the soul of man has

"AN IMMORTAL SUBSISTENCE"

rests upon but one text (comp. Ch. iv, 2) of any value, where in the account of man's creation we are told (Gen. ii, 7) that Jehovah God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. If the value of this proof lies in the fact that the product of the breath of God is here called a "living soul" it fails of its purpose; for the same Hebrew terms are used of other living creatures. If its value lies in the fact that it declares the Spirit of God to be the source of his life, we find that He is said to be the source of all life, and that the beasts that perish are also created by His breath (Ps. civ, 30). Other texts are quoted which prove that the soul of man lives after death, but they do not prove that its substance is immortal and that it can never die. Strangely enough, the Confession quotes in this connection Matthew x, 28, in which we are warned to "Fear Him who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell." If the soul can be destroyed in hell, as is the body, how can it be "of an immortal subsistence"?

The framers of this article erred in confounding soul with spirit. The soul of man is mortal, albeit it may long survive the death of the body. Man, however, as made in the image of God, is animated by His Spirit in a sense and to a degree which is not true of the beasts. It is the office of the Divine Spirit in man to build him up into a perfect image of God. When we are told that God at first made man in His image, we are not to suppose that his creation as such was then completed. The statement

in Genesis gives us the divine idea. The ideal man, as the son and heir of God, was from the first present to the divine mind, but he was not at once fully realized. And man becomes immortal only as he realizes this true end of his creation. Only thus does he become the eternal habitation of God through the Spirit. The Spirit that vitalizes and dwells in him is indeed immortal. And in an important sense this Spirit becomes in him a sub-conscious self. And when this God-consciousness becomes controlling in a man, it must penetrate and redeem and transform his body and soul for divine uses, and so immortalize the whole man. But the body and soul that are not thus yielded to Him must be destroyed. In such a case the "sub-conscious self," the divine Spirit in man, can never have identified Himself with the personality in the sphere of which the man lived and moved and maintained self-consciousness. The man remained a mere "natural man," and as such he dies. The Bible reveals no immortality for the natural man. And all men are not "spiritual," because the spiritual nature in them has not asserted its control. Hence, although this nature cannot die, the man in whom it was latent may die, because this nature has not penetrated his whole manhood with its immortal life. The personality in which the man existed and was known to himself and others, must perish, while the divine nature, which was the true core and essence of his being, but which was denied admission into the sphere of his thinking and acting, and so into his self-consciousness, lives on.

As this Westminister article thus fails to discriminate at the outset between the mortal soul and the immortal spirit, and to discover in what sense it is true that man is

perishable, and how he becomes immortal only as the Spirit of God finds that in him which He can build up into perfect manhood in Christ Jesus, it follows that its subsequent use of texts must be equally partial and unsatisfactory.

STATE OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

It quotes Heb. xii, 23; Phil. i, 23; I John iii, 2; II Cor. v, 1, 6, 8, to prove that "the souls of the righteous being then (at death) made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies." But among "the righteous" it includes every believer, and it would have us believe that the most imperfect Christian is at death perfected in holiness, and does immediately pass into glory. But because Scripture teaches that there are certain spirits of just men already made perfect, and that such sanctified men as Saints Paul and John could speak of themselves, and to others of their own class, as about to depart and be with Christ, and that a building from God was already awaiting them in the heavens, from whence they should appear with Him in glory, it does not follow that every Christian, whatever the measure of his self-sacrifice and preparation, can appropriate the same language. The current teaching of the New Testament implies that such immediate triumph over death, such exemption from "sleep" and from the hazards of the day of fire which shall try every man's work of what sort it is, such entrance—if not into the full glory of the resurrection life, at least into such experience of it as is described by Paul in the words, "not naked, but clothed

upon with our house which is from heaven," is the reward of extraordinary service and readiness to meet the Master's call. Indeed, we believe that his oft-quoted words, which so many apply to a distant resurrection: "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed," and, "We which are alive and remain"—find their explanation in the fact that he knew that he had fought such a good fight and had come into such fellowship with Christ's sufferings and death that no period of preparation or delay would be required of him, but that he should at once rise above death to live and reign with Christ. But to apply his exultant expressions to the case of the many Christians who seem to be cut off in the midst of their days, the measure of whose consecration was so small as to make it doubtful whether they belonged to God or the world, and to suppose that death effects at once for these what life had sadly failed to do, making them perfect in holiness and opening before them at once the gate to glory, is to draw a most unwarranted inference from Scriptnre, and to ascribe to death a saving efficacy which is contradictory of its whole character and office.

THE WICKED DEAD.

In proof that "the souls of the wicked are cast into hell, where they remain in torments and utter darkness, reserved to the judgment of the great day," we are referred to the parable of the rich man in hell (Luke xvi) and to St. Jude's comparison between the punishment of the angels who kept not their first estate, and who are "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day," and the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah, who

are "set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." If anything is clear in the case of Dives, however, it is that his being cast into hell was the result of a judgment already passed upon him for his worldly and selfish life. And in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah, we have an instance in which judgment was not only pronounced but executed. They "suffered the vengeance of eternal fire." That this carried with it the endless torment of the inhabitants of these doomed cities, as the next chapter of the Confession asserts of all the wicked, is disproved by the fact that the restoration of Sodom is distinctly promised in Ezekiel xvi, 48–63.

The radical mistake of this Westminster article is its assumption of the immortal existence of sinful being, which Scripture everywhere describes as destructible and mortal. It is betrayed into this mistake by confounding the soul of man with that spiritual element in his being which is divine and therefore eternal. That part of man indeed lives forever, because it is sinless and of God. From this point of view salvation is universal. But the body and soul in which it was building up for itself an enduring temple may prove unworthy, and the personality, which otherwise might have become immortalized by His eternal indwelling, may perish in His consuming fire. We are not required to suppose indeed that all the experiences which entered into such a vanished life are lost forever, or that they have no place in the perfected manhood to which the immortal spirit must finally attain. But this stripping off from the immortal spirit of all this accretion of sinful manhood is viewed in Scripture as the destruction of the man, because it is the loss of the self of which he was cognizant.

There can be no such thing, therefore, as the endless existence of wicked men beyond death. What in man exists endlessly is divine and can never perish. It may take on personal forms of manhood which are evil, and which must perish from the way in its progress toward the perfect form. It is the destruction of these of which Scripture so often speaks, and which traditional theology has distorted into the doctrine of an endless hell. There is no endless life but that which is of God, and we shall live endlessly just so far as we become conscious of and grow up into this life through the surrender of ourselves to its control.

What is needed, therefore, in order to harmonize the teachings of Scripture on this subject is:

1. We must acknowledge that to attain immortality is to be saved. To be immortal is to be forever blessed.

2. We must distinguish between the immortality of the divine-human nature, which is the root and ground of being in every man, and the immortality of each personal man in whom this nature seeks outward embodiment and expression.

3. We must recognize that men grow up into divine and immortal manhood through the development in them of the consciousness of God, or, in other words, as Christ is formed in them.

4. We must confess that all that enters into the development of man into a self-conscious personality which is transient and evil and corruptible must perish.

5. It must be seen, therefore, that personal continuity of being beyond death goes with character. It inheres in those elements of man's being which are divine and eternal.

So far as men have loved and practiced the things which are true and just and good, so far they come forth to a resurrection of life. They carry over with them into the life to come all of this kind of material which has been wrought into the fabric of their life here, for reconstruction into the tabernacle in which they shall dwell with God forever there.

6. The condemnation of the wicked is not that they must suffer endlessly in the life to come, but be stripped of the accumulated treasures of their former life, even to the extent of loss of personal identity in the case of those who have been utterly deaf to the voice of God within them, and wholly given over to the love and practice of evil.

PENALTY AND REMISSION.

It is evident that the controverted question of future punishment must be finally decided by the view that is taken in the Church of the penalty of sin and its remission. At the very outset of revelation the penalty pronounced against sin is death. And the New Testament teaches no other penalty. If anything is settled in Scripture it is this—that "the wages of sin is death."

It has been constantly assumed, however, that man cannot really die, that he is of an immortal nature; and hence this penalty is explained to be moral death and endless suffering, consequent upon eternal sin. And yet those who are most strenuous for this explanation insist that man is redeemed from this penalty only through the death of a substituted victim, whose death was certainly not

moral but actual. Their scheme obliges them to use the word death in two senses.

They are obliged to hold also that the death of Christ redeems man from this penalty. If he was doomed to suffer endlessly this penalty must, of course, in some way be annulled, or there could be no rescue.

But the Scripture truth about this matter makes no room for the legal fiction that one man can in this way satisfy the law of God for another, or that the judgments pronounced under that law, which are true and righteous altogether, can be set aside. Its uniform teaching is—and this is also the law of God in nature and in every realm of life—that every man's sin must find him out, and that he must reap what he has sown. It is not true that the sinner can escape his death sentence, nor has there been any provision for the remission of his penalty. This would argue some defect, either of exaggeration or of weakness, in the divine government which imposed the penalty. But the penalty is not the exaggerated thing which theology has represented it to be. Man was intended to bear the divine image and to become a personal expression of the divine nature, which is the groundwork of his being. If he develops into a sinful personality, unworthy of this high function and destiny, he must, in that form and character of being, be destroyed. But the divine nature which is the root and ground of his being cannot be destroyed. It cannot sin and cannot die. It, therefore, always remains as a basis for the reconstruction of his manhood.

The Lord Jesus Christ was born a natural man under the limitations, and subject to the infirmities, of our common manhood. But the divine nature in Him was so

pervasive and all-controlling that He did no sin. And yet He became subject to our penalty of death, that, in the power of His divine nature, He might reconstruct our human nature into the perfect image of God and after the fashion of an endless life. But His endurance of this penalty in our behalf was not to enable us to escape the penalty, but to provide for the reconstruction of our manhood after its infliction and beyond death. He died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and was raised from the dead the third day according to the Scriptures, in order that all who died in Adam might be made alive in Him.

It will be observed, therefore, that this is no provision for our escape from the penalty of sin, but for our salvation after its endurance. It is not a salvation from death, but out of it and beyond it. God's law is satisfied in the sinner's case, not by accepting the death of a substitute instead of his own, but by the sinner's own death. We are not to understand that bodily death is the whole of this penalty, for Scripture speaks plainly of a possible subsequent destruction of the soul in hell. "Soul" is not an equivalent term for the divine nature in man of which we have spoken. Soul is part of that embodiment in which the divine nature seeks to express itself. And its destruction is included in that death which is the wages of sin, so far as it has participated in that sin.

The mediatorial work of Christ, therefore, was not to provide a way for the sinner's escape from the wrath of God against sin, but in the depths of that wrath to lay the foundation for the building of him up into another life beyond death. As we have said elsewhere, He saves us, not *from* the penalty of our sins, but beyond it; not

from death, but after we have suffered it; not *from* judgment, but through it, and by means of it.

It is manifest that this view of Christ's atoning work places the whole discussion about future retribution upon another basis. We have no longer to consider the question of a further probation *before* final judgment, but of a restored life *after* judgment. The resurrection of the unjust cannot take place until after judgment is rendered and penalty exhausted, and its new gift of embodied life carries with it of necessity new opportunities of life. Not even the resurrection of the just takes place until after judgment. Judgment begins at the house of God. For the just man, and especially the justified man in Christ Jesus, confesses here and now judgment against himself and surrenders his old man of sin to death as its proper doom, and must finally lie down in death, as do other men, and see corruption. But even in this life he begins to be saved out of death and to know the power of Christ's resurrection.

But, it is asked, is not this doctrine of redemption through resurrection universalism, and is not the sinner just as well off in the end as the saint? We reply that one of its merits is that it reveals a God who is no respecter of persons, and whose government is not so loosely constructed that He has one set of principles in His dealings with one class of men and another set for another class. But if any man supposes that these principles furnish a loophole by which any class of men can get off scot-free, or that the divine penalties are not graduated on a scale of strict and unerring justice, so that every man is dealt with precisely as he deserves, he is fearfully mistaken.

This error of a partial and capricious God is the very one we contend against. Our doctrine does, indeed, set forth a salvation provided for all *beyond* the required penalty, and so it makes room for the boundless grace and love of God to all men, but it teaches that this penalty may be so heaped up by heinous and long-indulged sin, and its consuming fire may burn so deep, that nothing of the former man may survive the dissolution of his being but the core of the divine nature around which his evil personality has grown. He may come forth to a "resurrection of judgment" in which the judgment has been so severe and the pruning so thorough, that even self-consciousness may go in the loss of all the treasures of his former life. The man may thus "lose himself and be cast away," inasmuch as nothing worth preserving was wrought into the fabric of his former life. The new beginning may be so meagre and so far down the scale, that it might be even better if such a man had not been born into a life that yielded such scant returns and so little basis upon which to build the future.

We are persuaded that the perils of universalism are not to be evaded by any denial of the universal love of God, or any limitation of the boundless provisions of His grace, even by the free will of the creature, but by a stricter view and enforcement of the essential principle of His government, that He cannot be mocked, and that whatsoever a man soweth on this field of life, that must he also reap. And the motives of the gospel must be more rigidly presented before men, showing them that the only way to save our lives is to confess judgment against them in their present corrupt form and surrender them to deserved death, that we may recover them again in the power of

that pure and endless life in which Christ was raised from the dead. And men must be taught that, of all the things which they count dear in this life, their affections and aspirations and memories and hopes and human friendships and ties of kindred, and even their self-conscious identity as persons known to themselves and others, they can carry over into the life to come and recover there for the use and enjoyment and enrichment of that life, only as these things are now yielded unto God and pervaded by the transforming power of His Spirit. Only as the earthly house of this tabernacle becomes now a dwelling-place for God, even though His presence there must in the end dissolve and consume it, shall we find another tabernacle awaiting us, eternal in the heavens, which shall shelter us in our nakedness and gather into its structure all the gold and precious treasures of our former life, and be a temple in which God shall dwell in us and we in God forever.

INSPIRATION AND REDEMPTION.

We believe that the current controversy concerning Inspiration can be settled only through the apprehension of the fact that certain primary principles of redemption underlie the structure of the Bible, and that the men who wrote it were inspired of God in varying degree to apprehend these principles, to apply them to the religious needs of their times, and to forecast their triumph in the future. The inspiration of their writings is to be sought, therefore, not in the ability to verify every one of their statements or in the accuracy of the verbiage with which they clothed

their thoughts, but in the extent to which they were seized of these great principles, and in their ability to interpret the events of history and of their own times, and also the events of individual human experience, in the light of these principles. It is impossible for an interpreter who has discovered these principles in the Bible to be turned aside from them by an occasional text which seems to contradict them, or to suffer his faith in the Scriptures as the word of God to be lessened by anything which may be established by modern criticism concerning the authorship or the material of these books. He sees the same divine principles running through them all, guiding and uplifting the minds of the authors and compilers, and leading them and us, their readers, toward that perfect knowledge of God, with the light and purity and peace of which the earth shall yet be filled.

THE ONE PRINCIPLE of all others which has been most neglected in the traditional interpretation of the Bible is the redemptive character of resurrection. The purpose of God to redeem mankind from death, the wages of sin, through a resurrection from the dead, is the underlying principle of that revelation of Himself to men which He has made in the Scriptures, and supremely in His Son. But this principle has been ignored and virtually denied by the assumption that man is inherently immortal without a resurrection from the dead, and by the flagrant denial that there is any purpose of mercy in resurrection toward the vast majority of mankind—the unjust. These are only plunged by it into the gulf of eternal despair.

Had there been in the Church a true conception of death as the wages of sin, and of the "hope toward God" for sinful men involved in His provision to raise them from the dead, it would have been impossible for the Church to come under dire bondage to that hateful system of eschatology from whose deadly grasp she is now struggling to be free. And now that she is in the throes of another contest concerning the very foundations of her faith, the light of that hope would guide her safely through it all, if she would but acknowledge that principle. She would see how God's holy prophets were guided by it in all they spake and did in His name since the world began. Not that they were always conscious whither and to what glorious issues this principle would lead, nor that they knew the exact forms in which mankind should reach this triumph over sin and death; but the man who reads their Scriptures is blind, who does not discern, above all their dimness of vision and their exuberant forms of speech, the light of this great hope leading them and us on to a day of the Lord, beyond the night of death and judgment, when all the nations of the earth shall be blessed. What matters it whether the second division of the book of Isaiah be written by that prophet or, as is quite probable, by a prophet of the exile, if the divine principles which govern God's plan of creation and redemption furnish the framework for this fabric of truth and glorious vision, and thus reveal its inspiration on every page? Or why should I be startled at a contradictory statement in Kings or Chronicles, when I can see the thread of a divine plan running through all the history? Or why must I even be tied down to a Mosaic authorship for the whole Pentateuch, when I perceive

that, however or wherever written, it reveals the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world to take away its sin, and the eternal principles of that righteousness without which no man shall see the Lord?

What we are pleading for is such a view of the inspiration of the Bible as will lead us to rest our faith in the God whom it reveals, not in the fact that it is free from all human errors and mistakes, but in that it is built up around divine principles which are unchangeably true, and discloses divine purposes and hopes which are an eternal light shining in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day-star arise. And until we grasp these principles, we remain wholly unfit to interpret the Bible. A single text, of perhaps doubtful reading or rendering, will mislead us into a virtual denial of some first principle of the doctrine of Christ. The history of the Church gives mournful proof that men have been able to quote texts in support of all sorts of diverse opinions, some of them monstrously untrue. An Ingersoll will quote to prove that our God is a fiend from the very book that reveals Him as Love. What we need is established principles, to the test of which we must bring all our interpretations of texts, and by which we are sometimes to sit in judgment upon texts themselves. If some text seems to contradict an underlying principle of the whole Word, it may be sufficient reason for calling it in question. It is easier to believe that a false reading, an incorrect report, a copyist's error, an interpolation, or even a defect in the apprehension of the writer has crept into such a text, than to invest it with authority to deny or set aside one of the foundation principles upon which the whole volume rests.

EXTRACTS.

From an interesting book entitled *New Theories and the Old Faith*, by the Rev. J. Allanson Picton, of Hackney, England, we make these extracts.

Every special instance of our joy in truth and love suggests a larger range of such bliss; nor can the imagination once aroused stop short of a possible universe, in which every creature is blessed because consciously true to the divine thought, consciously embraced by and responsive to the divine love. In such a conception, and in such a conception only, can we find an ultimate rest for our souls. Give us that, and we find no insuperable difficulty in the long, slow, and often painful process of development which leads up to the final issue. For it may well be that degrees and contrasts of finite experience are necessary to the fullness of that issue, and when enshrined therein will explain themselves. Give us that, and it is not even needful for us to imagine that creation, development, conflict, redemption shall ever really cease.

What is the secret of the Lord but this, that all life is a communion with the Heavenly Father, all beauty a glimpse of His light, all joy a share in His bliss, all struggle and sorrow but a hint of the ineffable burden that he bears "in bringing many souls unto glory!" He, then, who has this blessed secret knows why he lives, and why creation enspheres his life, and why the whole world groans and travails in pain together until now. Such an experience, when bright and clear, is heaven begun on earth; it is a draught from that "river of God's pleasures" which some day we shall follow up to its source behind the veil. And he with whom is this secret of the Lord can look, if with painful longing, yet without despair, on all the dark-

ness of the world's mystery of sin. For his own experience tells him that God is not far from every one of us. His own communion with God he values, not as a personal or sectarian peculiarity, but as a token of the divine kinship of all mankind. Indeed, herein often lies the distinction between genuine religious experience and mere sectarian fanaticism. For the one makes us more human than before, brings us down from our personal isolation into the deeper region of life, which, though beneath the surface of consciousness in many, is nevertheless, we feel, a generic attribute of man. The other shuts us up in self or sect.

Nor is this all the distinction. Sectarian fanaticism will generally be found to eye the future with gloomy fear, sweetened only by the fierce joy of personal salvation as a brand snatched from a burning world. But he who feels most profoundly God's essential nearness to himself will derive from that a secure and sometimes triumphant confidence that one day God will be all in all.

Inspiration is a peculiarly intense form of the God-consciousness in man. It does not belong like that to the generic consciousness of man. It is something special and individual. It is the manifestation of God in the shape of an energy felt, a mission realized, a truth grasped, a fuller wave of life which the enraptured soul knows to be the overflowing of God. That is, to my mind at least, the essential idea of inspiration, but it has this advantage, that it enables us to see in this blessed influence, not a fixed, arbitrary, and extraneous force, but a living impulse capable of all degrees, from the higher mind God sometimes breathes on you and me, up through all the ranges of insight, vision, and revelation to the sublimest contemplations of St. John.

The inspirations of old times were not intended to rob the modern age of direct communion with God ; but rather to enrich the nature which makes it possible. They sug-

gest the tender yet solemn responsibility and the immortal significance which underlie the commonest life; and in awakening the conscience they prove, not the possibility only, but the actual reality of present communion with the Father. When once the reality of this truth is felt, then a criterion of truth is given better far, because more educational in its influence, than any outward infallible standard. For God must be better than the best that we can think; juster and purer than our highest thoughts; more loving, tender, and patient than our compassion's widest reach. Ask, therefore, when other certainties fail, does this or that view of religious truth most enlarge and deepen my love to God and man? Do I, for example, feel more the embrace of a Divine Life when I try to believe in everlasting damnation, or when I "faintly trust the larger hope."

For this I prize the Scriptures most of all; perhaps in this only do they stand unrivalled and alone in the monuments of ancient inspiration; that they awaken our divinest life by giving us to feel that in all our moral conflict, whether for our own salvation or that of others, we are only taking our part of the measureless burden of self-sacrifice borne by the Heavenly Father for His children's sins. If this then is the testimony to Christ which you value, if this is the inspiring influence which you prize, you may read on undisturbed by rival theories of inspiration; you will be preserved from any desire to make the Bible an armory for sectarian passion; you may differ from what you think an idolatry of the letter, but you will feel in spirit heartily at one with all past generations of Christians in the love they cherished for the Book of books; because your soul's experience tells you that the secret of their fervor lay in no opinion that they held, but rather in their devout feeling of what no articles can define, no canons enforce, no intellectual error exclude—"the power of an endless life."

LIMITS OF RESPONSIBILITY.

It is curious to note the comments in the secular press upon the responsibility of a teacher in any Church to be loyal to its creed. Now and then some journal will recognize the right and even the duty of such a leader, if he discovers that his Church has gone wrong at any point, to seek to amend and rectify its creed, but the most of these critics assume that the honest way for a man to take in such a case is to go out of his Church. Such a view is in violation of the first principle upon which the Lord constituted His Church. It was to be a body united to Him in life, and guided by His Spirit into that fullness of divine knowledge by which it was to grow up into perfect manhood, and become the ready instrument in fulfilling His purposes of blessing to the world. No feature in even the Apostolic Church was more marked than the elimination of false and defective views and the gradual development in it of larger views of God's gracious purposes. There is no evidence that this growth was to cease with the apostolic age. Such passages as Ephesians iv, 11–16, assume that it was to go on until the final goal was reached. To assume, therefore, that the Church was to be tied to bondage to a statement of dogma, save as, like the Apostle's creed, it gives expression to the primary *facts* of the Christian faith, is to deny the first principle which enters into its structure, and which makes it a living organism. Any man, therefore, who is led of the Spirit into larger knowledge of the ways of God as made known in either His works or Word, receives this knowledge as a

trust for his brethren. His vows of loyalty to them and to Christ require that he should seek to bring them up to the level of his higher perceptions of truth, and if these be higher than there is any place for in his creed, then it becomes his sacred duty to seek to amend it. And he has no right to go out of his Church until he has made honest endeavor to do this, and until he is disowned or cast out by his brethren, who must then take upon themselves the responsibility of rejecting one whom God has sent.

To hope for the supremacy of the good is among the finest and most rational exercises of Christian virtue. It is doubt that is weakness. It is pessimism that is the real denial of the faith. It is want of large, tenacious, and triumphant hope that often turns the nominal church of Christ into a half-hearted army fighting a battle in which defeat is a foregone and accepted conclusion.

To cultivate hopefulness is a duty as much as to cultivate morality is a duty. It belongs to the Christian's discipline in righteousness. Rational optimism is grounded in the reality and perfection of God. It is the irrefutable deduction from the gospel of the Son of God, which is the gospel of sovereign law and sovereign love.—*Rev. P. S. Moxom, D. D., in Andover Review.*

If we mistake not, no Christian doctrine now needs more attention, both in the pulpit and in theological lecture-rooms, than that of the Spirit's testimony through the Church—a testimony not restricted to the past, but ever augmenting in fullness and power, and discernible in every

age by those who are of a spiritual mind. Through such a ministration Christianity is revealed, not in its lowest terms, but in increasing measures.—*Andover Review.*

NOTES ON CURRENT TOPICS.

Presbyterian Doctrine.—The Rev. Henry P. Smith, D. D., Professor at Lane Seminary, declared on the floor of the General Assembly during the Briggs debate, that "The doctrine of the Presbyterian Church is that every minute thirty human beings drop into the abyss of endless torment. Do you face this awful problem of the destiny of the race? Most of us have the hope that God will find a way at some time to restore some of these lost souls."

Dr. Smith is perfectly right in stating that no better view of human destiny than this is offered to us in the Westminster Confession. The prospects are even more appalling.

In the face of such an awful issue to the world-problem, it is surprising how the tinkerers at revision can cajole with themselves and with the public in an effort to cover up this sore spot in their system with platitudes about the love of God toward all the world and the free offer to all men of salvation.

It is interesting to notice how the public press, in their criticisms upon this controversy in the Presbyterian Church, discern the fact that, even in this question of inspiration, the ultimate issue is one which relates to the more vital question of the extension of redemption beyond death. This is the real question which the Church and mankind at large are waiting to know the truth about. And this is the last question which the theological leaders are willing to have disturbed, and which they are perpetually seeking to evade.

Dr. Prentiss upon Dr. Patton.—The Rev. George L. Prentiss, D. D., one of the Professors in Union Theological Seminary, has this to say in the *New York Evangelist:*

He had an opportunity to speak a word and strike a blow for justice, for sacred scholarship, for reasonable liberty, both of thought and teaching, for the suppression of clamor as an ecclesiastical and theological force, and for the highest interests of Christian truth, which, like the shot of "the embattled farmers," would have been heard round the world. Acting, I do not question, from a strong sense of duty to the Presbyterian Church, he failed to seize it; and he will be a fortunate man, indeed, if Providence ever again entrusts to him such an opportunity.

The Andover Review says:

Dr. Briggs represents two things which cannot be dealt with "by way of discipline"—the rights of reverent Christian scholarship, and the enlargement of Calvinism to the measure of Christianity. He may have personal methods of urging these claims. Every positive man has like methods. They do not affect the main question. In the providence of God, Dr. Briggs has become one of the chief representatives in the Presbyterian body of that movement for the readjustment and enlargement of faith which is going on in all the great evangelical bodies. The moral necessity for the movement is too apparent, the principles on which it is carried forward are too well established, its Christian purpose is too thoroughly assured, for its supporters (and they are daily increasing) to succumb to any charges or cries of heresy.

A Disclaimer.—We are not surprised that a number of the Professors at Princeton College are dissatisfied with the prominent position of President Patton in the proceedings against Professor Briggs. They apprehend that, in the public mind, the College will be identified with the Theological Seminary as committed to the narrower views in this controversy. It is well enough to be concerned about the interests of the College, but this is a small matter compared with the interests of the truth involved.

Scripture Misapplied.—An intelligent young man, a member of the Presbyterian Church, asked us recently what reply he should make to a friend of his who had silenced him when he undertook to plead for the larger hope by saying, "What will you

do then with the words of Jesus, 'As the tree falleth so it shall lie'?" We replied to him that no such saying is to be found in the words of Jesus, and that, in the book of Ecclesiastes, where they occur, they make no reference whatever to the state of the soul after death.

We are sorry to say that this represents the average scriptural intelligence on this subject of a large number of Church members. Here was the case of two young men, one of whom quoted a garbled extract from a text in Ecclesiastes, as having been spoken by Jesus, to a friend who did not know enough of the matter to correct him, and a text, too, which had no bearing upon the question in hand.

FUTURE PROBATION.—Still we hear the old changes rung among the Presbyterian leaders about the dangers of this doctrine. The friends of Dr. Briggs come before the public with assurances that he does not teach or hold it. His colleagues in Union Seminary deny it. A committee of his friends in the Presbytery frame for him the somewhat carefully guarded query: "Do you hold to what is commonly known as the doctrine of future probation, and do you believe in Purgatory?" and he hastens to answer No. His defenders on the floor of Presbytery emphasize this point in his favor.

We have often in this magazine stated our objection to the ordinarily received doctrine of a future probation. We can well understand why, from their point of view, so many of these brethren should be eager to repudiate it. It is because it holds before sinful men the hope of a stay in the execution of the divine judgment against them. It removes the necessity for immediate action in the matter of their salvation. We object as strongly as do they to any doctrine that would produce such results. But our gospel of hope is altogether different from this. It denies that there is any possible evasion or delay in the divine judgment for sin. It asserts that the sinner is already condemned under it and abiding in death and under the wrath of God. It declares that only by present submission to this judgment, or by a fearfully aggravated experience of it beyond the bounds of this life,

can any man be brought into that position in which the grace of God can intervene for his salvation. It is only therefore *after* judgment is rendered and the sentence of God's law executed that any hope can break in on the case of the sinner. And it follows as a matter of course that the longer sin is indulged in, and the more gross its character, the heavier must be its penalty. Jesus describes it as issuing, in the case of aggravated sin, in the "destruction of body and soul in hell," the "loss of self." But the point we raise is—and to it none of our brethren have given a satisfactory reply—whether the provision to raise all men from the dead does not necessarily carry with it a provision to take up again the case of lost men *beyond* judgment and penalty—bear in mind, not before it, but beyond it. This would not be a second probation to try again a case not yet settled, or to find a way of evading its issue. It would be altogether a new and fresh case. The old gift of life would have been bankrupt and lost. As we have often insisted, the loss may reach even to the loss of the old personality. The new gift of life would, in such a case, be that of a new manhood, connected only at its root with the old, but shorn of all its old leaves and branches. All the accretions and treasures of the old life would be gone. These no man can carry with him, except as they become sanctified by being placed on God's altar, or as they are laid up in heaven.

False Christianity.—We have had recently some striking illustrations of the truth of the remarks in our last number about the defects of modern Christianity. Men who were high in the confidence of the Christian community, one of them being President of the Young Men's Christian Association, have shown a shameful want of moral principle in such important trusts as the management of a bank imposes. Numbers of people who trusted them are financially hurt or ruined, and the sad history closes with some of these men fugitives from justice or shut up in prison. We need a gospel in these days which shall re-affirm the gospel, as Jesus taught it, of salvation not by proxy but by character. There is not a word in His teaching that marks out any other way of life for man than that of personal righteousness. His office in

saving men has been falsely represented as the provision of a legal righteousness under which men may shelter themselves from the just consequences of their violation of God's laws. No such unworthy arrangement is possible under the divine government, whose judgments are true and righteous altogether. What Christ does for men is to enter as a new spirit of life into men, enabling them to bear their just penalties, even to the loss of their lives, in such a way that they will regain them, and building up in them a new life of righteousness, without which no man shall see the Lord. The false view of the atonement, which has grown up as a necessary offset to the horrible doctrine of an endless hell, is largely responsible for such distortions of the profession and practice of Christianity as have shocked this community the last few months, and brought undeserved reproach upon the Christian name.

THE POWER OF THOUGHT.—In *The Independent*, of June 11th, there is given a symposium of opinions from experts as to the "Cause and Cure of Inebriety." Among these is one upon the drink habit as affected by the power of thought, and the possibility of its cure in this way. Mr. Prentice Mulford says:

"I believe that the appetite for liquor can be controlled, through the exercise of a certain mental law, within the reach of all—that is, the law of silent demand. That is the power which one mind possesses of silently throwing its thought, or desire, or wish, or expectation, into another mind, and making such mind wish, desire, think, and act in accordance with the other's wish. The man who drinks will crave liquor the more if much in the society of those who drink. He will feel the craving less if much in the society of the temperate and self-controlled. No word or argument, for or against the use of liquor, need be made, in these cases, to increase or lessen such craving. It comes of the silent action of mind upon mind.

"If, in your own mind, you will say in thought that you do not expect a friend afflicted with this habit to give way to it, he will, through the force of your mind acting on his own, be strengthened to resist the temptation. If you will, in mind, always positively see him as temperate and self-governed, he will receive from you the force in thought, of temperance and self-government. If

several unite in so sending him this thought, and so seeing him in thought, they give him a proportionately stronger force to resist the uncontrollable appetite. They are, then, really praying for him, and praying in the strongest way.

"If we, in our minds, always see or image a man as a drunkard, we are sending him a current of thought which will aid the more to keep him intemperate. We are helping him to keep before him the image of himself as a drunkard. We must not in our minds say, 'I wish he would control himself,' and almost in the same thought say: 'I expect, or I am afraid he will get drunk the next chance he gets.' In so doing we increase those chances."

The philosophy upon which this is based is that of a root of divine nature in every man, which is his ideal self, although it may be hidden below the sphere of his self-consciousness. The theory is that the morally and physically debased man must find his only power of recovery in the evoking in him of this consciousness of a divine humanity which is his true self. The man must learn to value himself from that basis, and other minds may help him so to do by thinking of him as thus ideally perfect and able to recover himself. This is essentially the philosophy of what is known as the mind-cure.

As to this power of thought which one mind may exercise over another, there remains much yet to be discovered. The whole subject is very interesting and important in every one of its aspects. We can at least readily believe that it is most hurtful and depressing to surround a victim of vice with an environment of despondency and distrust, and that the only salvation for him is a belief in his better self based upon the belief that God has not given him over utterly to the control of his wicked self, and that there is a point of union between his true being and God which can never be broken.